

# Connect

Information Technology at NYU



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## NYU Libraries' New Website Unveiled

By **Tom McNulty & Nadaleen Tempelman-Kluit**

NYU Libraries launched its newly redesigned website this fall. The new website is more user friendly and offers a variety of enhancements, including:

- Fewer layers, less clicking
- An easy-to-use list of electronic journals
- Streamlined access to full text journals and books via the "Arch"
- Context-sensitive online help and instruction
- Less library jargon
- Important services, easily found on the homepage

Like many large organizations' websites, our old site reflected our administrative structure, and in some ways it failed to take into account the various ways people actually use the Web. In designing our new site, we put user needs and information-seeking behaviors first.

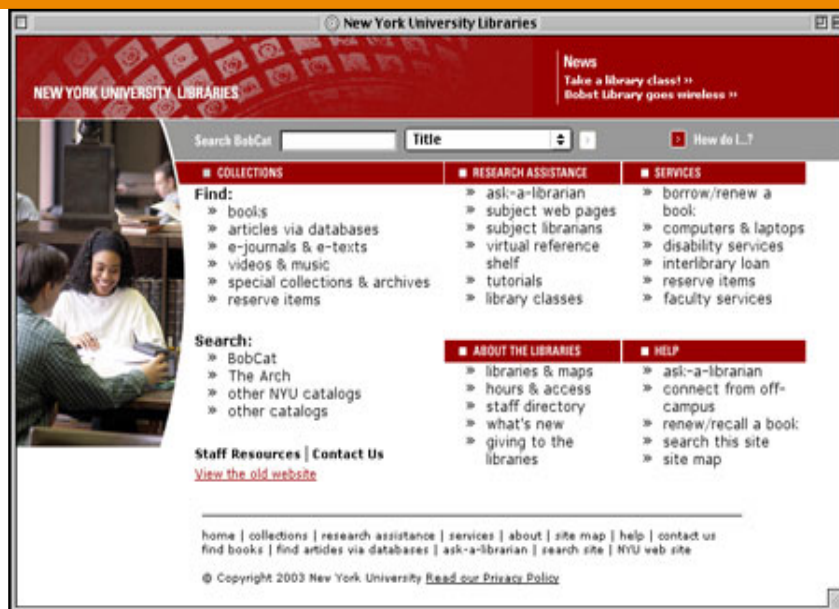


Figure 1. The main page of the redesigned NYU Libraries website, <http://library.nyu.edu>.

To accomplish this, the Library Web Redesign Committee conducted usability tests with NYU community members on our old site, and repeated the same test on the new design. (For more information, see "Web Usability Testing" in the Spring 2002 issue of *Connect* (<http://www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect/archives/spring02/libraries.html>)).

### Easier Access to Electronic Information: The Arch

Our newly re-designed website offers reliable access to electronic texts, e-journals, databases, and other online resources and materials through a new feature called The Arch. The Arch relies on a database to provide "on-the-fly" delivery of electronic information in a variety of formats. For example, a scientist in search of indexes to chemistry journals can select his or her subject area, choose "databases" as a format, and find the databases most relevant to the study of chemistry.

### Find Full-Text More Easily with SFX!

Many of our databases provide only citations to articles, and not the full text. In some cases, the actual journal might be available only in print; but in many cases, there is a digital version available through one of our many electronic services (like ProQuest).

However, because the Libraries now offer so many different services, finding the one that contains a desired item has become a bit like searching for a needle in a haystack. At least, this was the case until the arrival of SFX, our new bibliographic citation tool that streamlines the process by making a direct link to the desired item, if it is available electronically.

For more information, see "SFX: Providing Easier Access to E-Journal and Other Digital Scholarly Resources" in the Spring 2003 issue of *Connect* ([http://www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect/spring03/mcnulty\\_sfx.html](http://www.nyu.edu/its/pubs/connect/spring03/mcnulty_sfx.html)).

### Online Help, Tutorials, and Ask-a-Librarian

In designing our new site, we recognized the need for context-sensitive direction. Depending upon which of the site's main sections you are in, clicking the "How do

"...?" button will provide a list of frequently asked questions relating to that section.

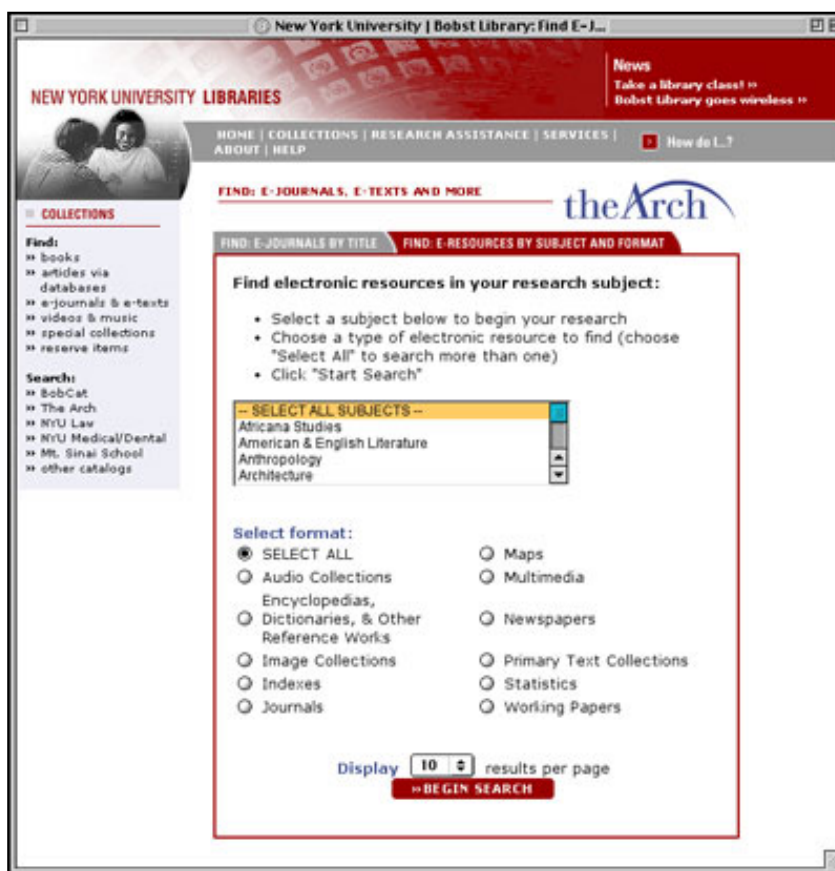


Figure 2. The Arch website, available at [http://library.nyu.edu/collections/find\\_ejournals\\_subject.html](http://library.nyu.edu/collections/find_ejournals_subject.html).

In our effort to make the site more transparent, we also made our "Ask-a-Librarian" service much more prominent. This live-chat and e-mail service has experienced an increase in traffic as a result. Placing the tutorials (e.g., "How to Find an Article") in more relevant locations on the site has also increased their usefulness.

### Subject Pages

Subject web pages provide links to information in a particular discipline. Developed by Subject Specialist librarians, these useful instructional tools provide keys to the many resources available to users in the various subject areas. Depending upon the specific subject, such a page might provide links to tutorials, class websites, Internet resources, and contact information for the Subject Specialist librarian.

### Let Us Know What You Think

We hope you'll find our new site easier to navigate and richer in content. Take a look, and send your comments to <http://library.nyu.edu/about/contact.html>. After all, your comments and feedback guided our redesign, and will continue to do so!

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